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I. Purpose

The purpose of this Directive is to establish policy and procedures for the riding of Division owned horses by off-duty officers, civilian personnel and volunteers. It is recognized that it is the duty of civilian barn personnel as well as qualified volunteers to exercise horses and to assist the Division mounted instructors in this effort. It is also recognized that off-duty officers can also assist in this effort as well as maintaining and improving their skills by this additional riding.

II. Policy

The Division's policy is:

- A. To require civilian barn personnel to ride Division horses in order to exercise them to ensure their fitness for duty thereby assisting the mounted instructors.
- B. To permit qualified volunteers to ride Division horses in order to exercise them to ensure their fitness for duty thereby assisting the mounted instructors.
- C. To permit interested and qualified persons to ride Division horses as a part of the Division's Ride Along Program.
- D. To permit qualified officers to ride Division horses on an off-duty voluntary basis, in order to maintain their riding proficiency, to prepare for special events, and to benefit the horses' fitness for duty.

III. Qualifications For Off-Duty Officers, Employees Or Civilian Volunteers

- A. In all cases, the person will be required to pass a riding evaluation administered by a mounted instructor. Officers who are currently assigned and certified Horsemounted Patrol (HMP) officers are exempt from the riding evaluation. All evaluatees will also be at least eighteen years old.
- B. All Division officers not assigned to Special Operations will sign a waiver of liability for horseback riding.
- C. Civilian volunteers will complete and sign all pertinent documents to be accepted into the volunteer program as well as a waiver of liability.

IV. Riding Evaluation

- A. The riding evaluation will determine the fitness and qualifications of the rider for this activity.

- B. The evaluation will consist of:
  - 1. The ability to groom and tack a horse.
  - 2. Work a horse at walk, trot and canter: The rider will be asked to demonstrate the knowledge of correct diagonals and leads. The rider will be asked to ride a horse at an even rhythmic pace at all gaits, making smooth transitions, and riding on the designated track.
  - 3. The rider will be asked to mount and dismount without assistance.
  - 4. The rider will be asked to jump a 2' 6" jump in proper form.
  - 5. The above mentioned requirements will be the basic test with further testing being given to those, who in the opinion of the mounted instructor, may be of value to the Division in assisting with training. That test will include various work on two tracks and a test of knowledge about work on a lunge line.
- C. The results of the evaluation will determine:
  - 1. The rider who demonstrates exceptional ability may be given training assignments and may ride unrestricted in all designated areas.
  - 2. Other riders may ride with certain restrictions. These will be noted on their evaluations.
  - 3. Riders who fail the evaluation will be eligible to retest after an interim period of at least 30 days.
- V. Civilian Ride Along Program
  - A. Civilians riding a horse as part of the Division's Ride Along Program will comply with all provisions of Divisional Directive, "Ride Along Program."
  - B. The riding skills of the civilian ride along will be evaluated by a Division mounted instructor prior to beginning any ride. The civilian may be limited to a certain horse and if that horse is not available, the ride along will be rescheduled.
  - C. The mounted instructor and the Special Operations Commander or Special Operations O.I.C. will determine the specific areas in which the ride along will take place.
  - D. The ride along will be scheduled so as not to interfere with Special Operations activities.
- VI. Volunteers and Off-Duty Officers
  - A. Will wear an approved helmet when on horseback.
  - B. Will coordinate their ride with the Barn Manager.
  - C. Will coordinate the riding assignment with the Barn Manager or a mounted instructor.

- D. Will ride in designated riding areas which may include adjacent trails and training facilities. Will be assigned a designated riding area and horse or horses depending upon their ability.
- E. Will carry a portable radio when leaving the property. Civilian volunteers, who have completed radio training in the volunteer academy, will use the call signs Nora 10 through 19. Division officers will use OD numbers and Division civilian barn employees will use their assigned Nora designation. Non-police officers will only use the radio for emergencies or when called on the radio.
- F. Riders will notify the on-duty barn personnel of their destination, if leaving the property to a designated trail or pre-approved riding facility. Riders will indicate their estimated time of return to the barn.

VII. Police Personnel and Volunteers Assigned to/ Not Assigned to Special Operations

A. Police Personnel

- 1. Officers currently assigned to Special Operations and qualified to ride are permitted to care for and ride a designated mount on an off-duty, voluntary basis. To participate in this program, one of the following situations must apply:
  - a. Officers who are currently certified for solo patrol may ride without supervision.
  - b. Officers who have completed the training program but not the FTO phase may ride without supervision.
  - c. Officers who are currently in training and who desire additional practice time may ride without supervision provided it is approved by a mounted instructor. Other officers may be required to ride while supervised only.
- 2. Officers who are not currently assigned to Special Operations may ride a designated mount on an off-duty, voluntary basis under the following restrictions:
  - a. Officers formerly assigned to the Special Operations and who have completed Horsemounted Training and FTO and who have not lapsed in their 30 day riding requirements may ride unsupervised.
  - b. Officers who have completed training but not the FTO phase will be evaluated if the training has been more than 30 days prior to the date of evaluation. The result will either be that the officer may ride without supervision, or be denied.
  - c. Officers who have not completed any horsemounted training with this Division will be evaluated just as civilians are required to be and assigned as without supervision, supervision only or denied riding privileges.
  - d. Officers not assigned to Special Operations will sign a waiver of liability.

- e. Officers who are denied because of failing the evaluation may be re-evaluated after 30 days.
  - f. Officers will ride in designated areas only. The designated areas may be adjacent to wooded areas as well as adjacent training facilities. Only those officers with exceptional skills will be allowed to ride the adjacent wooded area, trails and adjacent training facilities.
  - g. All officers leaving the property will notify the on-duty barn personnel of the destination, indicate an estimated time of return and carry a portable radio using the assigned OD number.
- B. Volunteers
- 1. Civilian volunteers will be required to complete the necessary documents required by the M-NCPPC Volunteer Services Office as well as a release of liability waiver. For this volunteer assignment, the volunteer must be at least 18 years old.
  - 2. Civilian volunteers will be subject to a criminal history check.
  - 3. Civilian volunteers will be required to pass a riding evaluation administered by a HMP mounted instructor. The volunteer will then be assigned duties according to their riding ability.
  - 4. Civilian volunteers will ride in designated areas. These areas may be adjacent wooded areas as well as designated training facilities adjacent to the stables.
  - 5. Only volunteers with exceptional skills will be permitted to ride the designated trails and to adjacent training facilities. The exception would be if accompanied by a certified mounted officer or stable manager.
  - 6. Any volunteer riding the adjacent trails or training facilities, who have completed radio training in the volunteer academy, will check out a radio and use the call number Nora 10 through 19. The radio will be used for emergencies only. Volunteers will notify the on-duty barn personnel of their destination and estimated time of return.
  - 7. Volunteers will check with the mounted instructor or barn manager for a riding assignment.

**Approved Park Police Document  
Signed Original on File**

**End of Directive**